

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

To place the subject application in better form, the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities. Also, a new abstract is presented in accordance with preferred practice. No new matter has been added by these changes.

Claims 1, 2, 4 through 8, 10 through 15 and 17 through 20 are presented for consideration. Claims 1, 13 and 20 are independent.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and solely to advance prosecution, claims 1, 2, 4 through 8, 10 through 15 and 17 through 20 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention, while claims 3, 9 and 16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Also, claims 21 through 29 have been added to recite additional features of the subject invention. Support for the foregoing changes can

be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 1 through 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner objected to specific recitations in several of these claims. To expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended the pending claims in light of the Examiner's comments. Applicants submit that these changes overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Such favorable indication is requested.

Turning now to the art rejection, claims 1 through 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,373,523 to Fujimoto, et al. in view of either U.S. Patent No. 5,586,134 to Das, et al. or U.S. Patent No. 5,023,884 to Akins, et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,383,217 to Uemura. Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach many features of the present invention, as previously recited in independent claim 1. Therefore, this rejection is respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, to

expedite prosecution, independent claim 1 has been amended to amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

In one aspect of the invention, independent claim 1 recites a gas laser device that includes a chamber for sealingly storing a laser gas therein, and for producing light amplification through reflection of light between a total reflection window and an exit window, a discharging electrode for exciting the laser gas through electrical discharge, so that laser light is outputted from the chamber, a blower for circulating the laser gas within the chamber, so that the laser gas passing an electrical discharging region of the discharging electrode is circulated in the chamber and is returned to the electrical discharging region of the discharging electrode, and control means for changing revolutions of the blower between (i) an in-operation state in which the laser gas is excited by the electrical discharge from the discharging electrode and the laser light is being outputted, and (ii) a stand-by state in which no laser light is emitted, but an output of the laser light is being prepared.

Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such features of the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1.

In this regard, none of the Fujimoto, et al. patent, the Das, et al. patent or the Akins, et al. patent teaches or suggests a controller for changing revolutions of a blower between an in-operation state in which laser light is being outputted and a stand-by state in which no laser light is emitted, but an output of laser light is being prepared, in the manner of the present invention recited in independent claim 1. Further, the Uemura patent does not teach or suggest the use of a blower for the circulation of a laser gas. Therefore, that patent adds nothing to the teachings of the remaining art that would render obvious, Applicants' present invention recited in independent claim 1.

The Examiner states in the Official Action that a state in which a fan is stopped would be considered to be a stand-by mode. This contention is respectfully traversed. Applicants submit that, in ordinary gas laser devices, a "stand-by" mode would be a mode in which all the functions, except for emission of laser light (that is, electrical discharging from a discharging electrode) are kept

functional, just the same as in an in-operation or an in-process state (that is, a state in which the laser is being outputted). Namely, all the functions inside the chamber would be kept in in-process conditions.

The inventors of the subject application, however, have determined that it is not always necessary to hold the same blowing capacity (for example, revolutions of a blower) in the stand-by state, as that during the in-process state. Based on this finding, the subject inventors have achieved the present invention wherein the revolutions of the blower are changed between an in-process state and a stand-by state. Applicants submit that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach such features of the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention, as recited in independent claim 1, is patentably defined over the cited art, whether that art is taken individually or in combination.

Dependent claims 2, 4 through 8, 10 through 12 and 21 through 26 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent claim

1. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

For reasons similar to those advanced above with respect to claims 1, 2, 4 through 8, 10 through 12 and 21 through 26, Applicants submit that the present invention is patentably defined by claims 13 through 15, 17 through 20 and 27 through 29. Notably, the cited art is not read to teach or suggest at least the features of the blower control of the present invention recited in those claims. Therefore, those claims likewise should be deemed allowable over the cited art.

Applicants submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010.

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Respectfully submitted,



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